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THE CATHEDRALS OF ENGLAND

SUCH a general survey of the most representative English cathedrals as is undertaken in the present article naturally leaves no space for a detailed consideration of the various diversities of architecture that they present, and future issues of this series will be devoted to illustrating, individually, the various developments of the English Gothic style. The characteristic features of the English Gothic cathedrals, as compared with those of the Continent, and particularly with those in France, are as follows:—

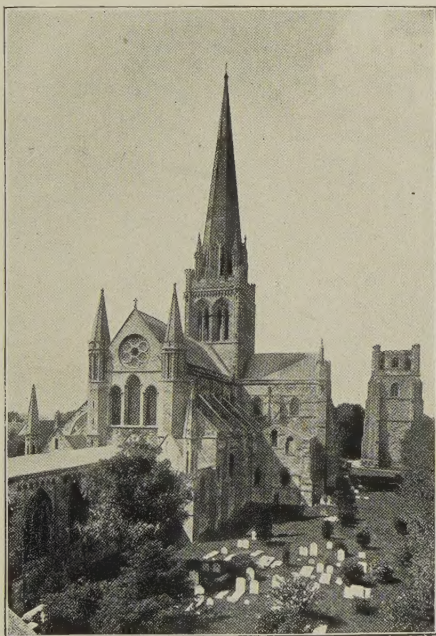
The English minsters are long, narrow and low in contrast with the greater squareness and height of French contemporary churches. The English transepts have bolder projections, and the number of side chapels is smaller. The east end is almost invariably square. The aisles are practically always single; Chichester is the only example to the contrary. The central tower is a predominant feature; and a

single western tower is characteristic of English early churches. Flying buttresses, though not uncommon, are not so prominent as in French cathedrals. Doorways

are more simple, placed in less important positions, and often provided with a separate elaborate porch, as at Salisbury. Window traceries, though developing along the same lines as in France, finally evolve "Perpendicular" instead of "Flamboyant" tracery. The beautiful fan-tracery vaulting is an important feature of English Gothic, and is peculiar to it. The clustered shaft is a special feature of the style. Great emphasis was placed by the English architects on the development of mouldings; and the generally smaller

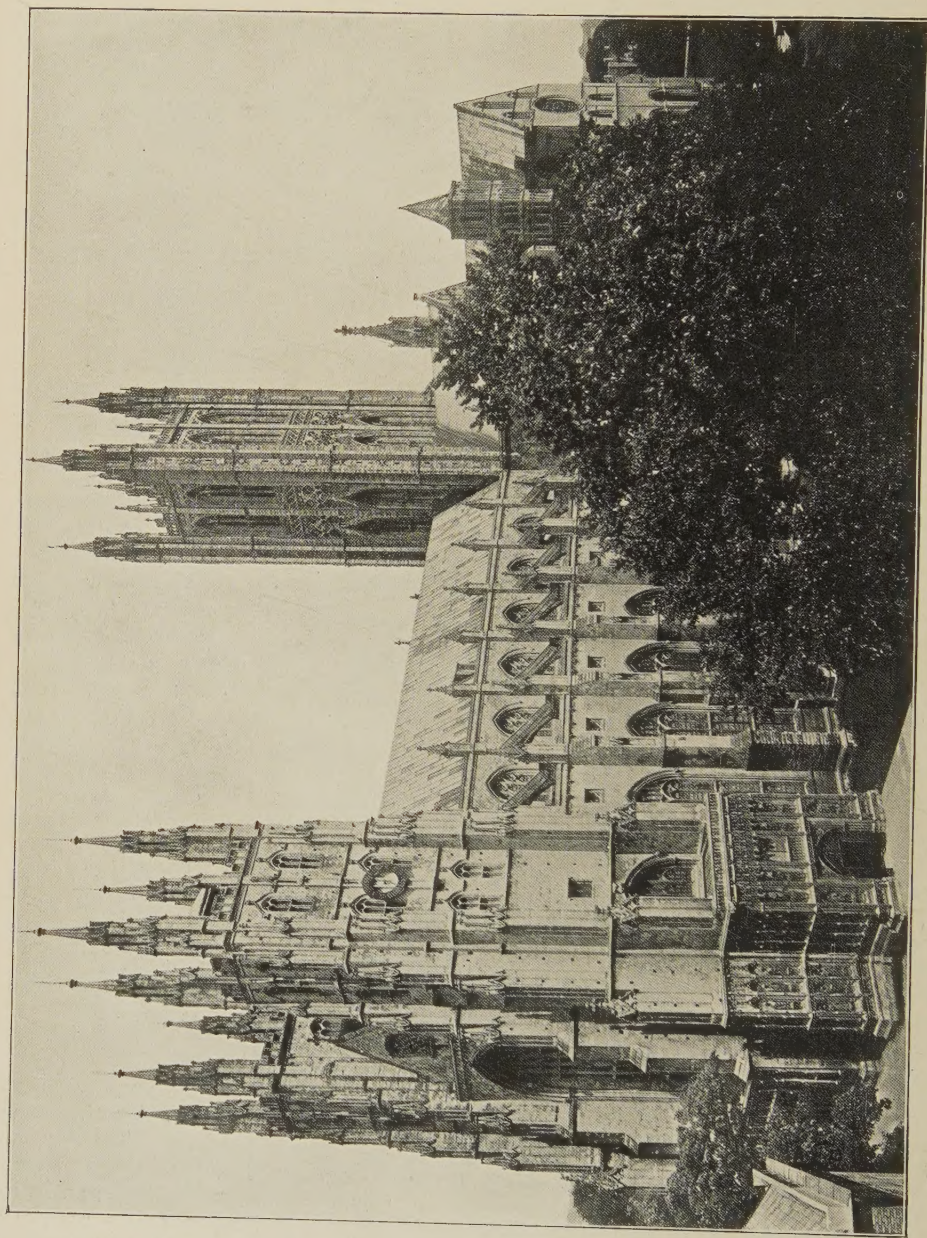
scale of English work lead to greater refinement and attention to detail in carving.

Perhaps the most striking difference between the English and the Continental cathedral, is however, in its situation. Instead of being almost invariably pressed



CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL

FROM NORTHEAST



upon and crowded by the streets and shops of the city, the English minster is usually set about with great masses of foliage, and wide stretches of lawn.

The architectural significance of the various constructional dates given in the brief historical synopses which follow, will be made clear by reference to Mr. E. A. Freeman's tabulation of the English styles by dates.

I. ROMANESQUE.

Saxon before 1066.
Norman 1066-1195.

II. GOTHIC.

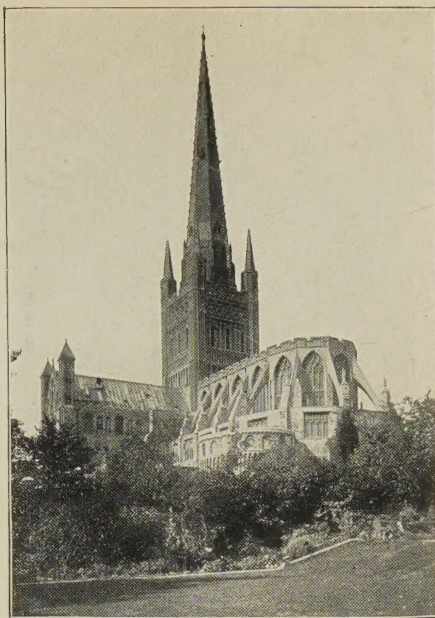
Early English or "Lancet," 1189-1300.
Decorated { Geometrical } 1300-1377.
 { Flowing }
Perpendicular 1377-1547.

III. RENAISSANCE.

Including Elizabethan, Georgian, Palladian, etc. . . 1547 *et seq.*

The last thirty years or so of each period may be described as a time of Transition from one style to the succeeding.

In considering the English cathedrals the Saxon style may be disregarded, as there are no important remains which date prior to the coming of the Norman conquerors; and the only cathedral church of



NORWICH CATHEDRAL

FROM EAST

prominence in the Renaissance style is St. Paul's in London.*

* St. Paul's Cathedral was illustrated in THE BROCHURE SERIES for November, 1900.



CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

THE CHOIR

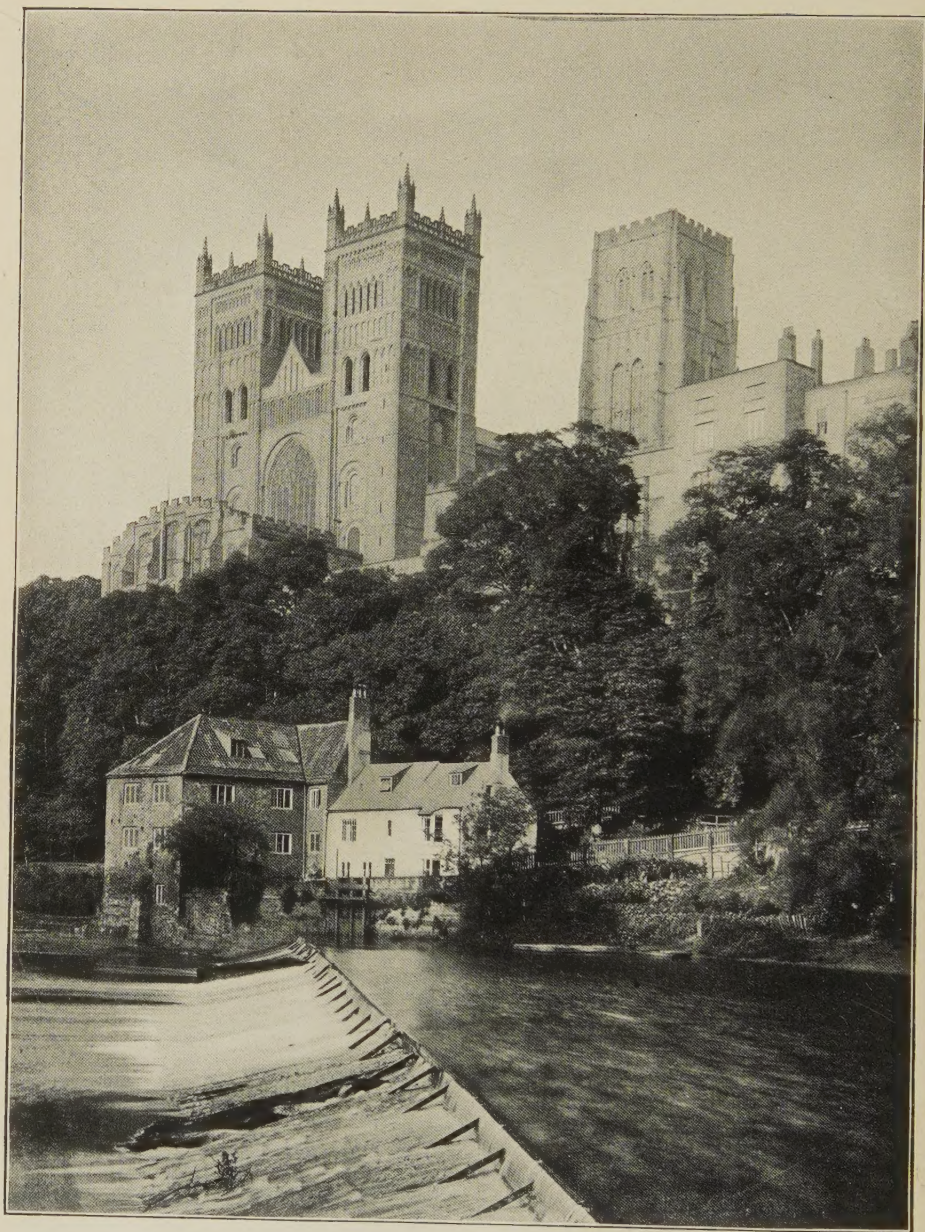
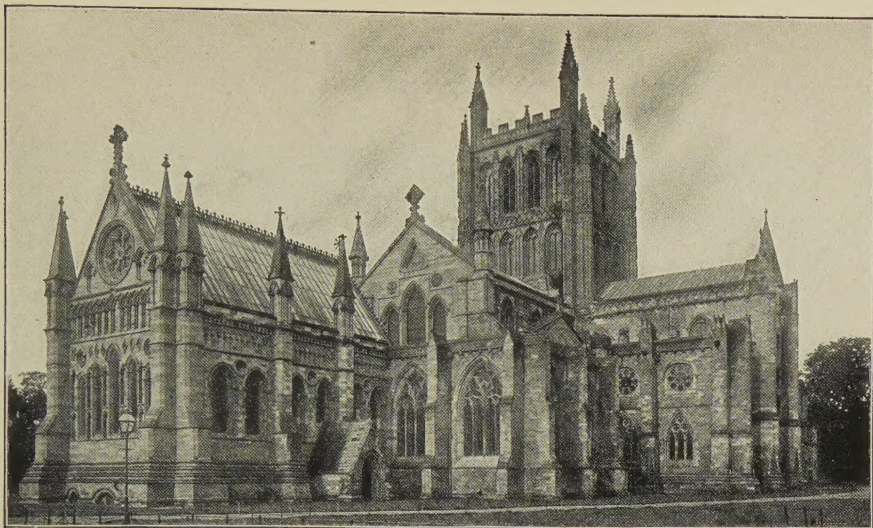


PLATE XCIII

DURHAM CATHEDRAL FROM THE WEAR RIVER



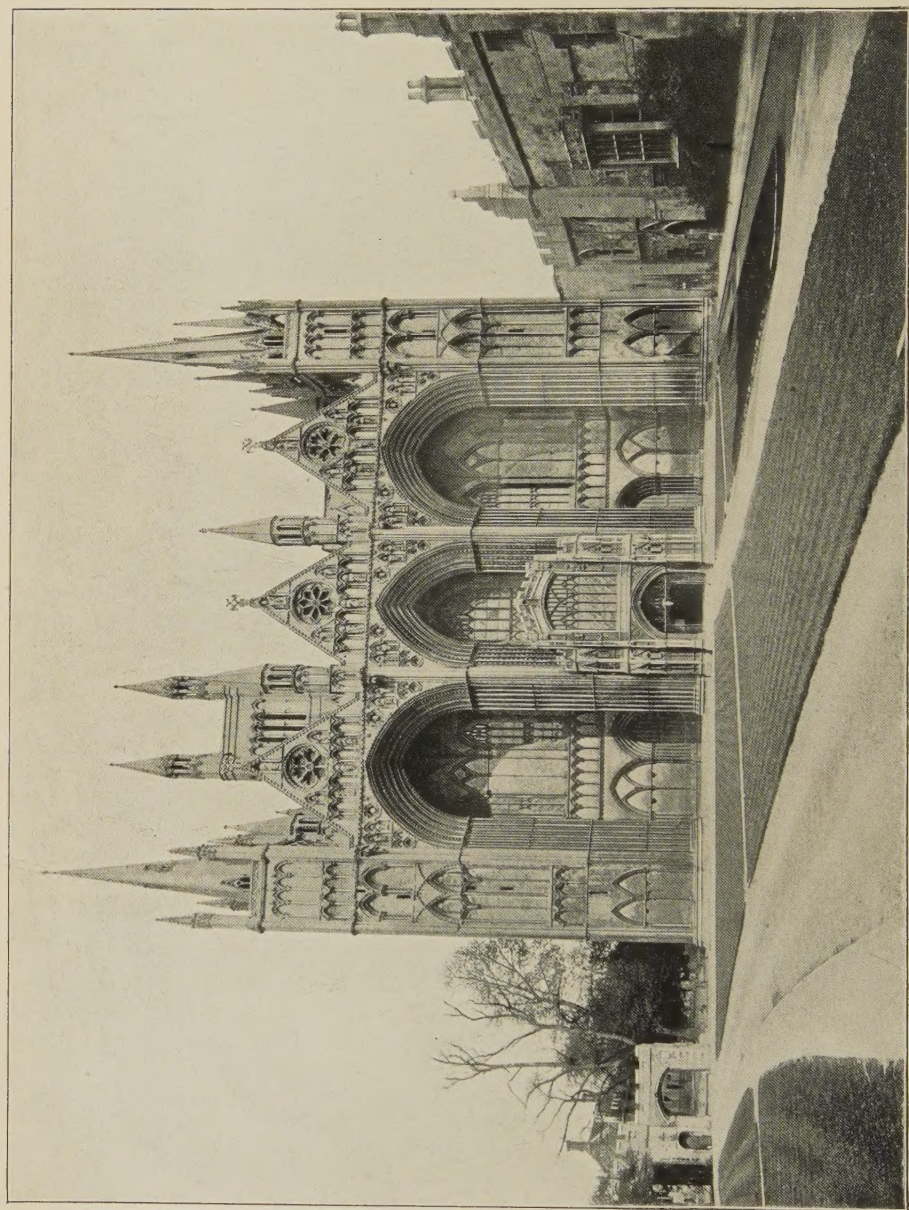
HEREFORD CATHEDRAL

FROM NORTHEAST

Litchfield Cathedral is sometimes styled the "Queen of English minsters," and, though surpassed by other cathedrals in age, size, grandeur of site and elaborate decoration, it has yet claim to the title because of the symmetry, proportion and picturesqueness of its general effect. It is built of red sandstone, and dates mainly from the thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries. The earliest structure on the present site was a Norman church dating from about 1100. The oldest part of the existing building is the lower part of the west half of the choir, erected about 1200. The transepts followed in 1220-40; the nave dates from 1250, and the west front from about 1280, while the Lady-Chapel belongs to the beginning of the fourteenth century. The cathedral close was formerly surrounded by a wall and moat; and in 1643 the cathedral was defended against the Puritans, who battered down the central tower and demolished many of the carvings, monuments and windows. It was, however, restored before the end of the century. The most conspicuous external features are the three beautiful spires and the fine west façade. This façade is one of the most graceful and harmonious in England; and it has the advantage over such a front as that of Peterborough in its organic connection with the rest of the building. It is covered with niches for about one hundred statues, almost all of which are now filled with modern carvings.

Chichester Cathedral was originally begun about 1085, completed in 1108 and burned down in 1114. In its present form it is substantially a Transitional Norman building of the twelfth century, with some pointed details introduced after a second fire in 1186. The Lady-Chapel dates from 1288-1304. The spire, erected in the fifteenth century, collapsed in 1861, and has since been rebuilt. The whole edifice has been restored since 1848. The detached Bell Tower, a feature peculiar to Chichester among English cathedrals, is, despite its weather-worn appearance, one of the most recent parts of the building, dating from the fifteenth century.

Canterbury Cathedral, the third church erected on the same site, represents English architectural history from 1070 to 1495; but its general external appearance is that of a magnificent building in the Perpendicular style. The present structure was begun by Laufranc, the first Norman architect, and was finished in 1130. The choir of this Norman cathedral was burned in 1174, and the present choir, in the Transitional style from Norman to Early English, was erected by William of Sens (who may almost be said to have introduced the Pointed style into England), and by his successor, William the Englishman (1174-1180). The old Norman nave and transepts remained intact for two hundred years more, when in 1378-1410 they were replaced by the present Perpendicular structure.



The great central tower was added in 1495. The northwest tower is modern, the older tower having been pulled down, with doubtful wisdom, to make room for one to match its southwest neighbor. In spite of its huge proportions the interior of the nave produces a wonderful effect of lightness. The choir, one hundred and twenty feet long, is the longest in England. The great Norman arches, supported by circular and octagonal piers alternately, furnish a striking contrast to the inner portions of the nave.

Norwich Cathedral was begun in 1096, and has preserved its original Norman plan

six finest English cathedrals, though, apart from its magnificent situation, the first impression made by the exterior scarcely seems to warrant so high a place. The composition of the east end is externally unsatisfactory; and the west front suffers from the difficulty of obtaining a good near view.

The site was first built upon by the monks of Lindisfarne, who, in 999, chose it as a resting place for St. Cuthbert's remains. After the Norman conquest a new and larger church was begun, the choir of which seems to have been completed in 1093-95. The transepts and nave, also in



PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL

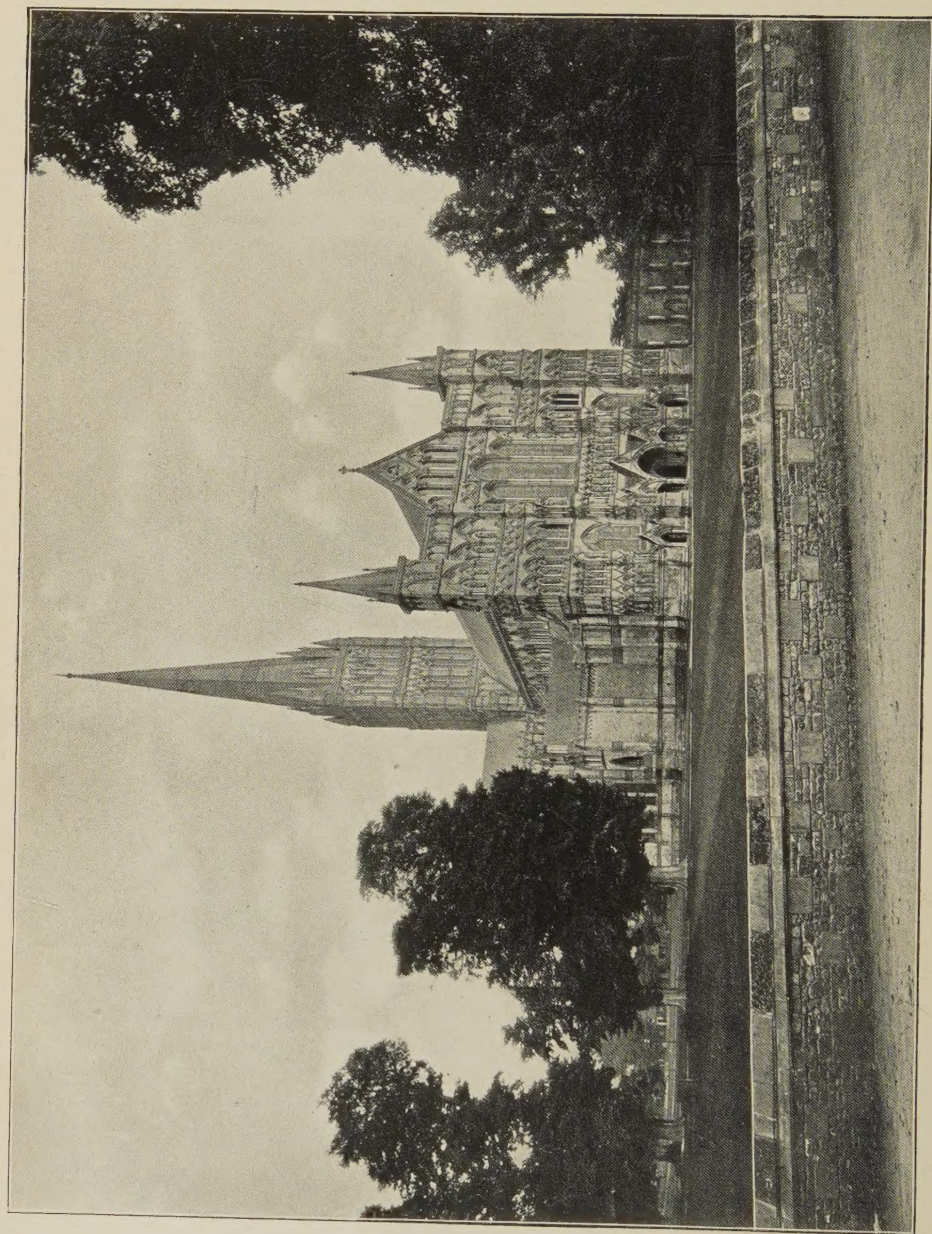
CHOIR

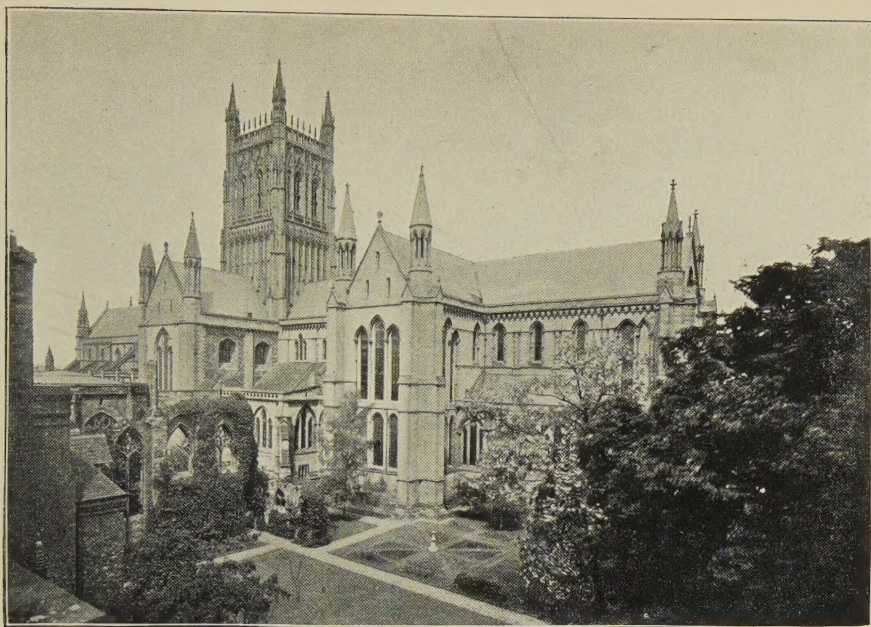
more closely than any other in England. The first Bishop of Norwich, Herbert de Losinga, completed the choir and transepts, and began the nave. The latter was finished by his successor about 1140. The clearstory of the choir was rebuilt in 1356-69, and the vaulting of the nave and choir were added in the fifteenth century. In the same century the west front was altered, and the spire rebuilt. The most prominent features of the exterior are the lofty spire and the unusual apsidal termination of the choir.

Durham Cathedral, locally known as "the Abbey," is usually ranked among the

the Norman style, were all finished by 1143. The cloisters and upper part of the central tower are Perpendicular (1400-80). A destructive restoration was carried out in 1778-1800, sweeping away many ancient details, and spoiling the exterior by scraping. Recently the entire building has been restored.

Hereford Cathedral was begun in 1079, and not finished till 1530, and consequently shows an interesting mixture of architectural styles. The nave, south transept and piers of the tower are Norman, the Lady-Chapel is Early English; the north transept was rebuilt between 1250 and 1288; the





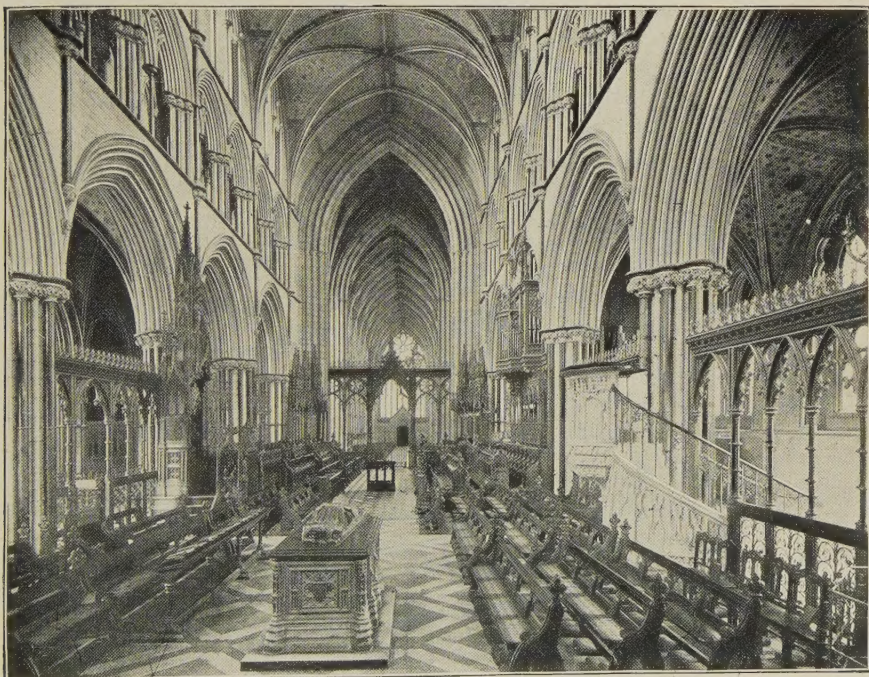
WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

FROM SOUTHWEST

north porch was erected about 1290. The tower dates from the fourteenth century.

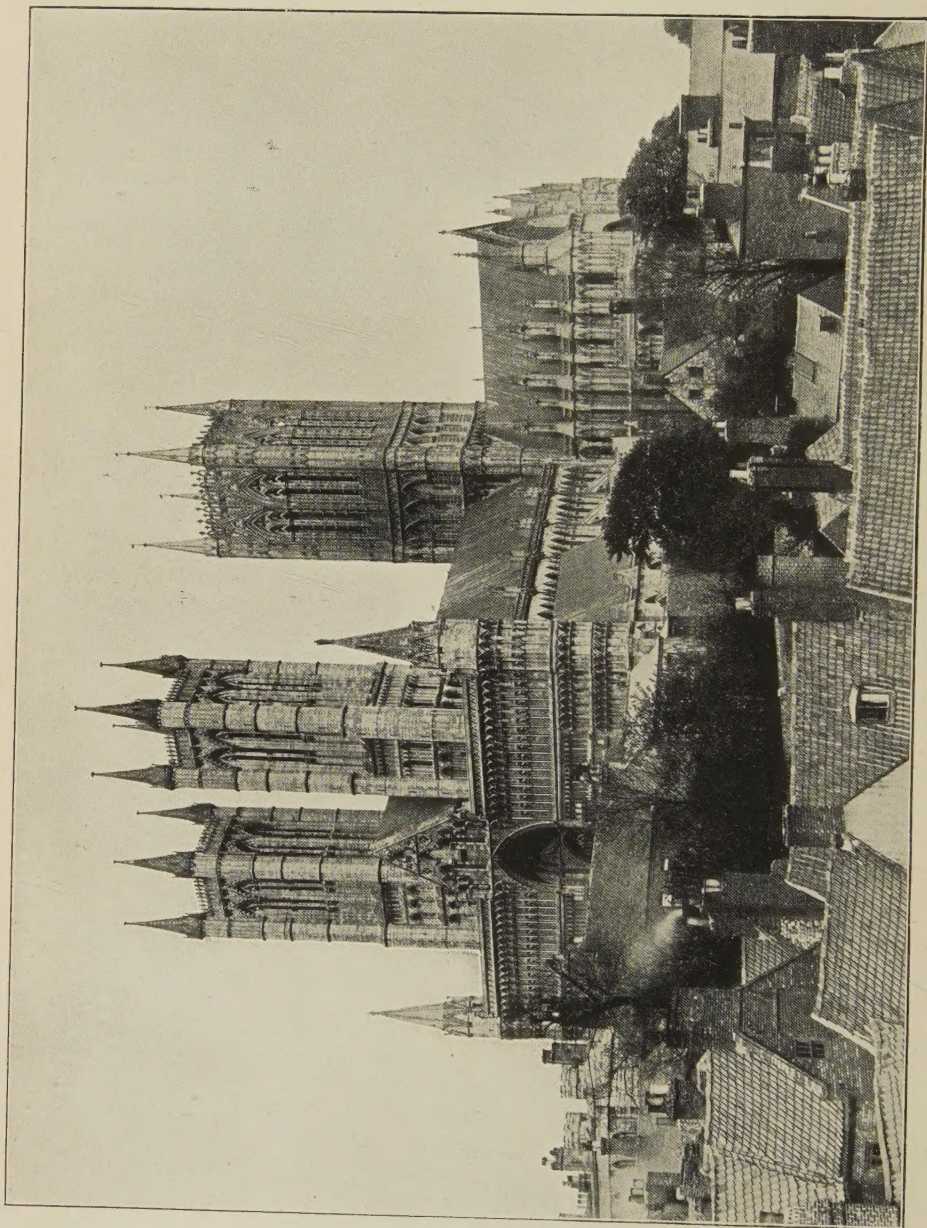
Peterborough Cathedral is one of the most important Norman churches left in England, though at first glance the ex-

terior does not seem to bear out this assertion. The elaborate and somewhat foreign-looking west façade, with its recessed arches, gables and sculptures, is however an Early English addition of



WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

CHOIR



about 1220; and forms, as it were, a screen in front of the original west wall. The present building is the third church on this site. The first was destroyed by the Danes; the second was burned in 1116. The oldest part now standing is the choir, consecrated about 1140. The great transept dates from 1155-77, the late-Norman nave from 1177-93, and the west transepts, in the Transitional style, from 1193-1200. A series of uniform Decorated windows was added throughout the church in the fourteenth century. The spires and pinnacles of the flanking turrets of the west façade are of the Decorated and Perpendicular periods. The interior gives an impression of unusual lightness for Norman architecture, an effect enhanced by the color of the stone. In 1643 it suffered severely at the hands of the iconoclastic Puritans. The clearstory and triforium of the nave are impressive in size and effect. The painted wooden ceiling dates from the twelfth century.

Salisbury Cathedral is a splendid example of pure Early English, having had the rare advantage of having been begun and finished within a period of forty years, 1220-1260, and is remarkable for the uniformity and harmony of its construction. Mr. Ferguson has pointed out that there is scarcely a trace of foreign influence in the building, the square east end taking the place of the apse of the Norman churches, and fixing the future character



LINCOLN CATHEDRAL

CHOIR

of English choirs; and he adds that it is "one of the best proportioned and at the same time most poetic designs of the middle ages." The various parts of the building all unite to lead the eye to the central point,—the richly adorned spire built in 1250, which is the loftiest in England. The sculptures on the beautiful west front were nearly all destroyed by the Puritans, but have recently been replaced.



WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL

WEST FRONT

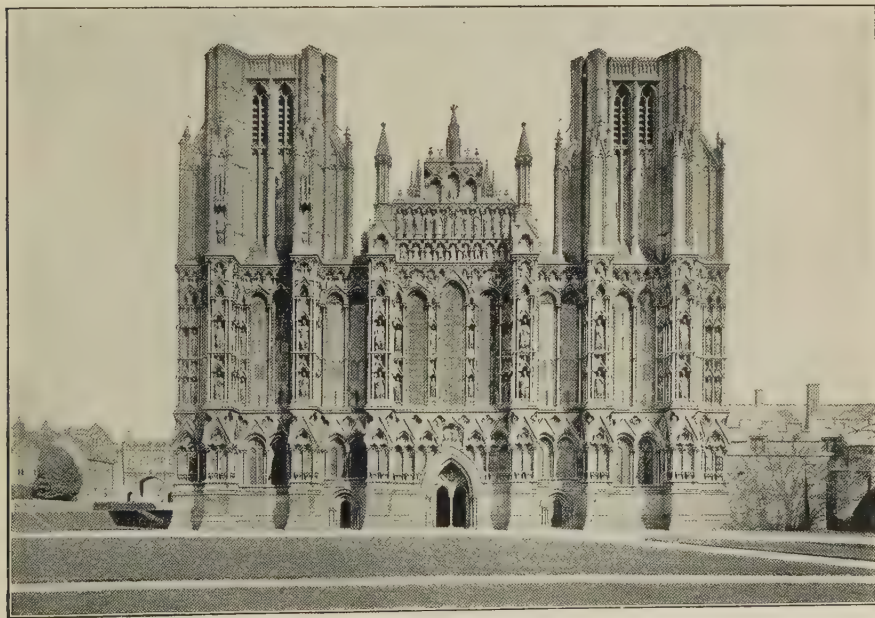


Worcester Cathedral is in plan a double cross with very short transepts, and with a chapter-house and spacious cloisters on the south side. In general characteristics it is Early English, but includes specimens of all styles from the Norman down to the latest Perpendicular. The oldest parts of the present church are the choir and Lady-Chapel, which date from the first quarter of the thirteenth century. The north side of the nave belongs to the Decorated and the south side to the early Perpendicular period; but they are very similar in general appearance. The central tower shows traces of the transition from Decorated to Perpendicular. In the interior, the choir dates from the purest Early English period, and impresses by its richness and uniformity; and the magnificent groined roof, extending in an unbroken line for 420 feet, is a feature that perhaps no other cathedral can match.

Lincoln Cathedral, splendidly crowning the hill on which the city is built, may perhaps claim to be the finest church in Great Britain. Other cathedrals equal or surpass it in certain points; but in the combination of size, delicacy of detail, effectiveness of both interior and exterior, good preservation and grandeur of position, it has probably no rival. Of the origi-

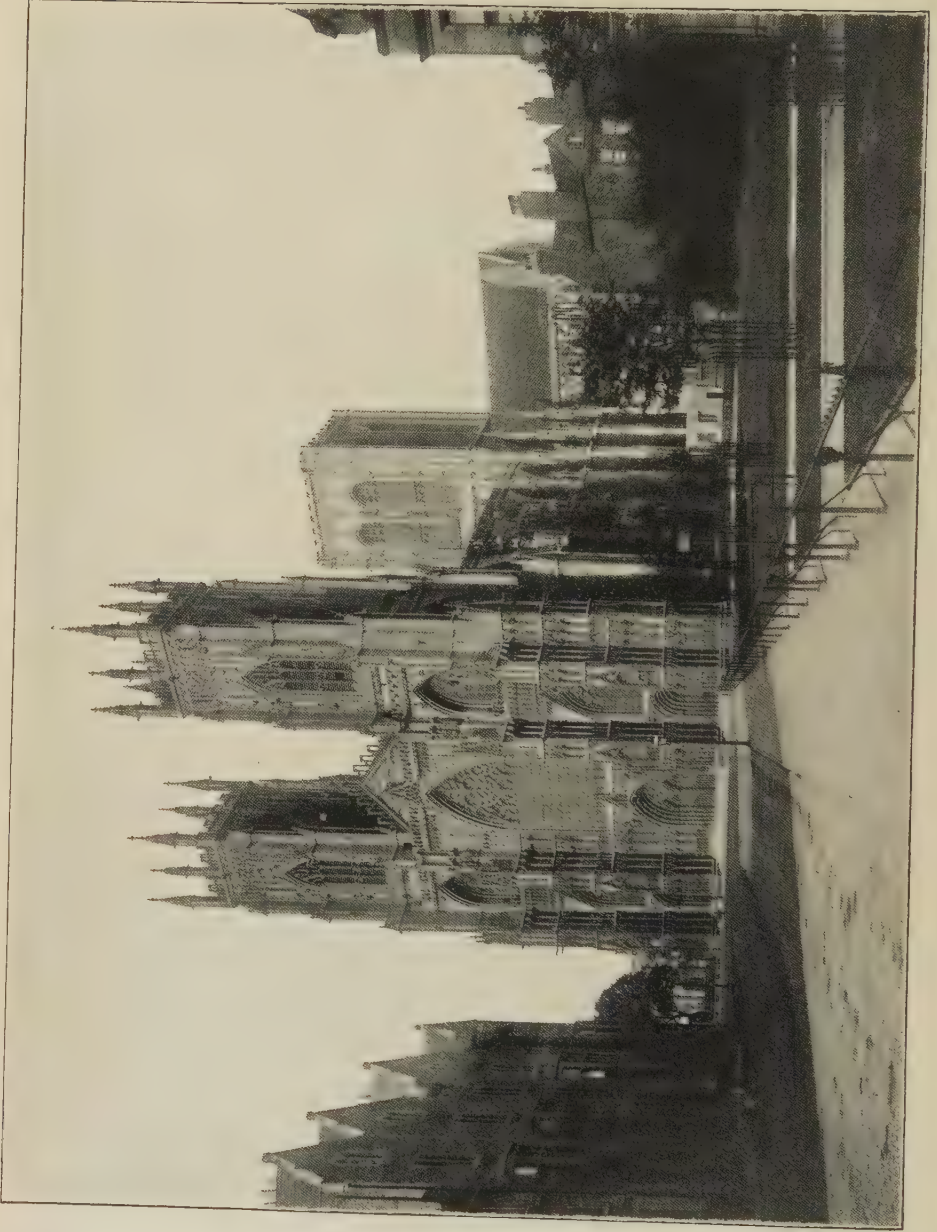
inal cathedral, built at the end of the eleventh century, the tower, a portion of the west front, and part of first bay of the nave remain. The Norman cathedral was injured by an earthquake in 1185, and its restoration was at once undertaken by Bishop Hugh, called "St. Hugh of Lincoln" (1186-1200), who finished the choir and east transepts—the earliest piece of Early English work of known date. The west transepts and chapter-house were completed soon after, and the nave, including the west front, by about 1250. The upper story of the central tower, which dates from about 1240-50, was added between 1300 and 1320. The upper parts of the west towers are late Decorated, dating from about 1380. Among the more noteworthy external features are the fine central and west towers, and the west façade, in spite of its mixture of styles and the fact that it is in some degree merely a screen. The choir of the interior is the oldest known example of the Early English style, and is separated from the nave by a decorated screen (1320) surmounted by the organ. Though the vaulting is too low the entire interior is harmonious and imposing.

Winchester Cathedral is a stately edifice, incorporating every style of English archi-



WELLS CATHEDRAL

WEST FRONT



ture from the Norman to the Perpendicular. It was founded on a more ancient site in 1079. The choir and transepts were finished in 1093. The conversion of the nave from Norman to Perpendicular was begun by Bishop Edington before 1366, and the whole was completed in 1486. The builder of the greater part of the nave was Bishop William of Wickham, the renowned architect and statesman, who occupied the See from 1366 to 1404. The church is the longest in England, measuring 560 feet in all. The west façade, with its spacious

taken of this opportunity to construct the beautiful decorated octagon. A new spire was erected on the west tower at the end of the fourteenth century, the weight of which may have caused the collapse of the north-west transept, though some authorities think the latter was never finished. The whole building has been carefully restored. The most striking feature of the edifice is the castellated west tower, which is unlike any other cathedral tower in England, and to some extent suggests military rather than ecclesiastical architecture. The



WELLS CATHEDRAL

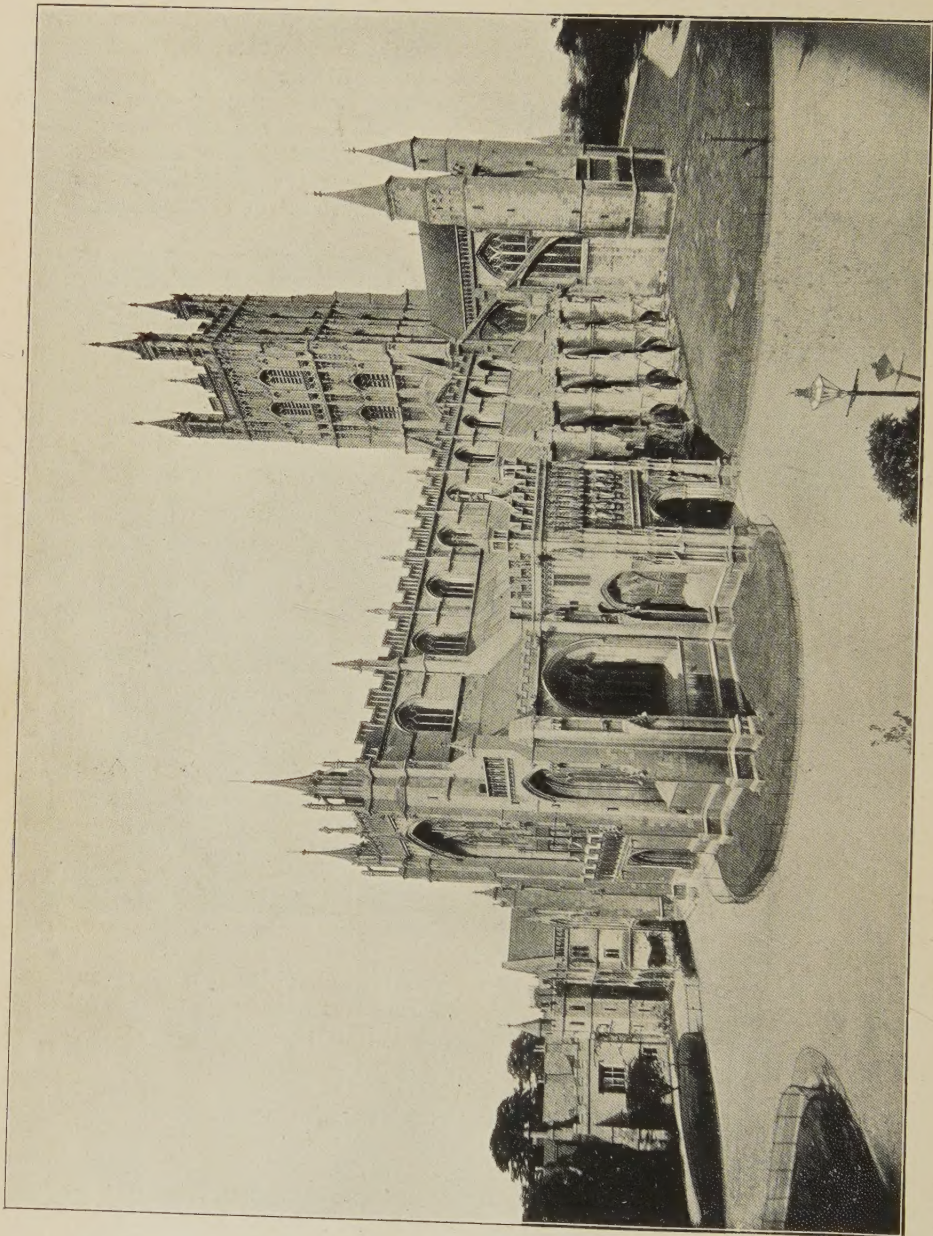
CHOIR

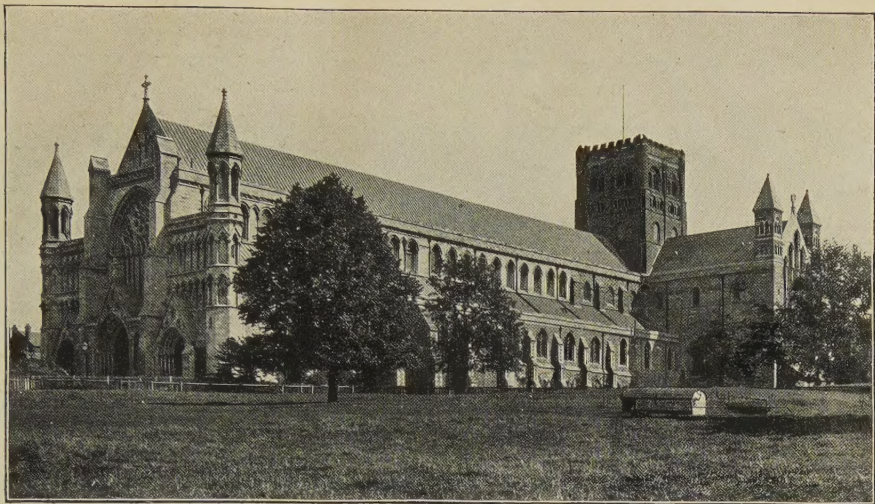
portal, was begun in 1350, finished in the fifteenth century, and restored in 1860.

Ely Cathedral is architecturally one of the most interesting in England. It occupies the site of an abbey founded by St. Ethelreda in 673. The existing building was begun in 1083 by the first Norman abbot, and the last half at least was completed in its original form when the see of Ely was created in 1109. The west part of the nave, including the west tower, was finished about 1180, and the west porch was added before 1215. The east end was added between 1229 and 1254. The central tower, which belonged to the original church, fell in 1322, and advantage was

greater part of this tower is Transitional Norman (117-489), but the octagonal top and turrets were added in the decorated period.

Wells Cathedral is, in its present condition, predominantly an Early English building, of the first half of the thirteenth century. It is the third church on the same site, and the foundation of the present edifice is commonly attributed to Bishop Joceline, 1206-1242. The church as he designed it was finished at the end of the thirteenth century. Thereafter a complete transformation of the east part was undertaken, the first step being the construction of the Lady-Chapel, about 1320,





ST. ALBAN'S ABBEY

FROM SOUTHWEST

while the Presbytery dates from about 1350. The upper parts of the central tower also belong to the early fourteenth century. The upper parts of the west towers and cloisters are Perpendicular. The beautiful west façade, elaborately adorned with arcading and sculptures, is, like the west front of Lincoln, architecturally a mere mask. The choir, one of the most beautiful in England, is Early or Geometrical Decorated in the general effect.

York Cathedral is one of the largest and grandest of English minsters. The present structure is the third on the site, and was built by the first Norman bishop. The choir was rebuilt by Archbishop Roger, 1154-81, the south transept by Archbishop Gray in 1215-55, and the north transept about the same time, while the Norman nave was gradually replaced by the present one between 1290 and 1345. The Lady-Chapel was added in 1360-73, and the present choir substituted for Archbishop Roger's before 1400. The towers date from the fifteenth century, and the edifice as thus rebuilt was reconsecrated in 1472. In its present form, therefore, the minster shows examples of the Early English Decorated, and early and late Perpendicular styles. The most striking features of the exterior are the noble west façade in the Decorated and the imposing central tower in the Perpendicular style.

Gloucester Cathedral stands on a site consecrated to religious purposes since the seventh century. The church was raised

to cathedral dignity in 1541, having previously been included in the diocese of Worcester. In its present form the body of the church is the work of Abbot Serlo at the end of the eleventh century; but this Norman core was most skilfully altered and recased, chiefly in the fourteenth century, and in general external appearance is thoroughly Perpendicular.

St. Albans Abbey, which was raised to the dignity of a cathedral in 1877, is one of the finest and largest churches in England. The earliest parts of the existing building date from the eleventh century; the choir was built in the thirteenth, and the Lady-Chapel in the fourteenth. The fine tower is Norman. An extensive, and not especially successful, restoration of the buildings including a new Early English west front with a large decorated window, has recently been completed.

Exeter Cathedral, though comparatively small and unimposing, is, in virtue of its details, one of the most admirable examples in England of the Geometrical Decorated style. The oldest existing parts of the building are the transeptal towers, dating from the early part of the twelfth century, almost unique features in English churches. The rest of the cathedral was built, or, at any rate, altered from Norman to Decorated, between 1280 and 1370, mainly from designs of Bishop Quivil. The elaborate west façade was added by Bishop Brantyngham (1370-1394). The whole has been carefully restored.

